

Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission  
Commission Meeting  
May 16, 2013

The Commission Meeting for the Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission was held on Thursday May 16, 2013, at The Sloppy Floyd Government Office Building 2 MLK Jr. Drive Atlanta, GA 30334.

| <b>The following Commissioners were present:</b>  | <b>Others Present:</b>  |
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| J.J. Biello- Chairman<br>Moses Ector- Vice Chairman<br>Rick Thompson<br>Ben Kiker<br>Hunter Towns- by phone | Matt Woodruff<br>Attorney General Office [Graham Barron]<br>Opie Bowen<br>David Oblas<br>Henry Okafor<br>Nate Mann (GAEC Official)<br>Amy Lynn Hoch |
|   | Megan Swartslander<br>Adrian Patrick<br>Chris Stephans<br>Khunpon   |

**Chairman J.J. Biello established** that a quorum was present and the Georgia Athletic and Entertainment Commission meeting that were scheduled to begin at 11:00 a.m. was called to order at 11:00am a.m.

**Motion to Approve** the commission meeting minutes from April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Commissioner Rick Thompson makes a motion to approve, and Commissioner Ben Kiker seconds that motion. The commission votes 5-0 to approve.

**Motion to Approve** the 6/9/2013 MMA NFC 57 second event permit. Chairman Biello asked Matt Woodruff if all the proper paperwork has been submit. Mr. Woodruff stated that everything for this permit has been submitted. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion and Vice Chairman Moses Ector seconds. The Commission votes 5-0 to approve.

**Motion to Approve** Explosive A51 promoter's license application. Chairman Biello asks if all the paperwork has been submitted. Mr. Woodruff said that everything has been turned in. It is Chris Stephan's from Explosive Sports, he is just renewing with a new name. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to approve. Vice Chairman Ector seconds, and the Commission votes 5-0 to approve.

**Motion to Approve** the 8/24/2013 MMA Explosive A51 event permit. Chairman Biello asked Mr. Woodruff if all the proper paperwork has been submit. Mr. Woodruff stated

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that everything for this permit has been submitted. Chairman Biello makes a motion and Commissioner Kiker seconds. The Commission votes 5-0 to approve.

**Motion to Approve** Mezereon Management renewal of a promoter license application. Chairman Biello asked Mr. Woodruff if all the proper paperwork has been submit. Mr. Woodruff stated that this is Lisa Hudson Webb, and she is just renewing her license and that everything for this application has been submitted. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion and Vice Chairman Ector seconds. The Commission votes 5-0 to approve.

**Motion to Approve** Pink Umbrella Events promoter's license application. Chairman Biello asked Mr. Woodruff if all the paperwork has been submitted. Mr. Woodruff said that this is Adrian Patrick's wife's company and all paperwork has been submitted. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to approve. Vice Chairman Ector seconds that motion, and the Commission votes 5-0 to approve.

**Motion to Approve** the 6/22/2013 Pink Umbrella Events boxing event permit. Adrian Patrick asked if he could change the date of his event to June 30<sup>th</sup> due to conflicts with the event site. Chairman Biello asked Mr. Woodruff if all the paperwork has been submitted. Mr. Woodruff said that everything was submitted. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to approve the event by changing the date from June 22 to June 30 and the weigh in being moved from June 21 to June 29. Vice Chairman Ector seconds, and the Commission votes 5-0 to approve.

**Motion to Approve** the license application for Curt Render. Chairman Biello asked if Mr. Render was present, and Mr. Woodruff said that he was supposed to be, but has not made it. Mr. Woodruff said that Mr. Render is 41 years old, with a 6-19 record and wishes to obtain a Boxing license. Chairman Biello tables until the end of the meeting to see if Mr. Render shows up.

**Motion to Approve** the license application for Lashaun Blair. Chairman Biello asked if Mr. Blair was present, and Mr. Woodruff stated that Mr. Blair has been on the agenda for a while now, and the board has previously stated that they would like to have him come in and meet in front of the board. Mr. Woodruff also said that he was supposed to be, but has not made it. Mr. Woodruff said that Mr. Blair is 40 years old, with a 4-27 records and wishes to obtain a Boxing license. Chairman Biello tables until the end of the meeting to see if Mr. Blair shows up.

**Purposed Rule Change** to 85-4-.07, contestant's equipment. Chairman Biello asked Mr. Woodruff to tell the board what is going on. Mr. Woodruff stated that last month the board directed the Secretary of State's office to draft up a purposed rule for headgear in kickboxing. The reason for this rule is to formalize a policy. Chairman Biello asked Mr. Woodruff to read the rule out load for the record. Khunpon, promoter of Bangkok Fight Night, brings some gloves and headgear to the board so they can see the headgear. Commissioner Thompson asked him, if he was in favor of this rule. Khunpon ask the board, what if a fighter has fought a bunch of amateur MMA with advanced rules, all without headgear, and then wants to fight amateur Muay Thai, and he would be required to wear the headgear. Commissioner Kiker said that the

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promoter would be required to provide the headgear, which he is not a fan of that, because the risk of infections from repetitive use. Commissioner Thompson asked Khunpon why is having headgear a bad thing? Fighters are going to hit square in the face, they are not going to hit a fighter in the headgear. Another problem is that if the fighters get tied up close together, the headgear could come off and stop the fight. Commissioner Thompson wanted to know if any other states require headgear for amateur Muay Thai. Mr. Woodruff said that he was not sure, but does know that the ISKA requires it and that was kind of who we mirrored with the addition to the advanced rules without having headgear requirements. Chairman Biello asked why we wanted to change the rule and Mr. Woodruff said that we just wanted to formalize a board policy. Commissioner Thompson wants to add language "the fighter may bring his own headgear, if it is commission approved". He also would like to know what other states require this. Nate Mann, a GAEC official, said most states just combine kickboxing and Muay Thai rules together. Commissioner Kiker said promoters don't want to see fighters having to have fighters wear it. He wants to see the fighters want to wear for at least the first 3 fights. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to add language to the rule and table until June. Chairman Biello wants some research done on this topic also. The Commission votes 5-0 to table.

**Discussion** on MMA total number of rounds required for an event. Commissioner Thompson said he was sure that the board made a policy to change the number of rounds to 21 for an MMA event. Commissioner Thompson asked Mr. Woodruff to look back in the old minutes and see if something has been changed. Also Commissioner Thompson wants to know when the cutoff is for rounds scheduled because fights can drop off the day of. Mr. Woodruff said when he looked back in the previous minutes, he was able to locate on August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2008 that this topic was brought up to move the round requirements from 25 to 21, and that discussion was tabled and not mentioned again. Mr. Woodruff also emailed Andy Foster to ask him if there was a policy in place, and he said that there was a policy in place by the board to allow MMA shows to have 7 fights making 21 rounds. Chairman Biello said that we need to make a rule change then, and not just have a policy. Mr. Woodruff said he added a purposed rule change for this. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to move forward with the rule change to allow MMA shows to have 21 rounds, but also wants to know when the rounds scheduled is and when they are okay to be in compliance with our rules. 7 fights scheduled at the weigh in then you are complying with the rules. Chairman Biello asks if you add a few amateur fights to the card, as stand-by that could prolong the night. Adrian Patrick wants to ask for boxing to also be allowed to follow that rule and have 21 round minimum. Commissioner Thompson said boxing is 4 rounds, so a minimum of 24 rounds. Megan Swartslander, the fight card is final for 3 days prior to the fight. That is the cutoff on when the fights are scheduled. David Oblas, scheduling fights is the hardest part of matchmaking and promoting the show. Amateur fights are the stand by; they are the ones who make the show. Promoters don't want to go to 7 fights. They want to have the card around 10-12 fights. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to adopt the purposed rule change for MMA rounds, and to change the total number of rounds from 25 to 24 rounds of boxing and if the fights are scheduled 3 days prior then you are in compliance in the rules. Commissioner Kiker seconds the motion, and the Commission votes 5-0. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to give the authority to the Secretary of State to conditionally approve the 7

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fight (21 rounds) prior to 3 days prior to the event. Vice Chairman Ector seconds the motion, and the Commission votes 5-0.

**Re-Vote** for the addition of Dual Arch mouthpieces being adopted into our current rules. Commissioner Thompson tabled this discussion from the previous meeting because he was not sure as to what they previously had voted on. Mr. Woodruff explained that this was voted back on in September 2012; however it never made it to the Attorney General's office. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion that we send it to the Attorney General's office. Chairman Biello seconds that motion, and the Commission votes 5-0. Chairman Biello wants to make sure that our next week falls after 30 days so that these 2 rules can be voted on again then.

**Follow up Discussion** on number of referees working an event. Mr. Woodruff said that this topic was tabled from the last meeting since Vice Chairman Ector wanted to have the entire board present for this discussion. David Oblas said he would like to have 1 referee work the event instead of 2. Have a second referee as backup, but they can serve as the timekeeper or a judge if they are not the referee. That way it would allow the promoter to save a little money. Mr. Oblas feels that the show can be run with just one referee, and you don't need to have 2 referees to work an event where you only have 8 fights on the card. Commissioner Kiker wants to know who all could be the possible replacement referee. Mr. Oblas said if that is the case where you move the timekeeper to referee then then Commission representative at the event can move over to work the time. Chairman Biello said he is not a fan of this, because at events he always sees two referees. Commissioner Kiker has no problem letting 1 referee work the event. Commissioner Thompson wants to know how many fights a referee can work at an event. Commissioner Kiker said the maximum number of fights a referee could work would be 10-12 fights a night. Commissioner Kiker makes a motion to allow 1 referee to work the event, with the new training referees work the other remaining fights. Commissioner Thompson seconds, and the Commission votes 5-0. Commissioner Towns leaves the meeting due to another meeting.

**Discussion** on David Oblas' rule violation from April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013 where he violated rule 85-1-.04 (4) (b) (1). Mr. Woodruff stated that there was not enough scheduled rounds for the event. The event had 18 rounds, where our rule states you have to have 25, and the policy now is 21 rounds. Commissioner Thompson said there was a policy in place, and why as a commission did we allow this rule violation to occur. Why wasn't the event shut down? Chairman Biello asked Mr. Woodruff why the event was not canceled and Mr. Woodruff said that he cannot answer that as to why it was not. Chairman Biello asked David Oblas why he only had 18 rounds. Mr. Oblas said the event had many more fights scheduled, however 2 fights the day before fell off. 1 fight fell off due to an injury and the other was because the fighter did not want to fight. The week before the event, there was more than 7 fights scheduled. Vice Chairman Ector asks Mr. Woodruff is this has ever happened to him before. Mr. Woodruff says that there was 1 fight where he had 8 fights, which if you go by our rules, then he violated it, but if you go off the policy he is good. Commissioner Kiker says sometimes things are out of the promoters hands and they cannot do anything to fix it. If the fights are scheduled 3 days prior then you are fine. Commissioner Kiker also says this is why you need to have opponents you can just call up to fight. Those are the guys

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who are 9-20, and will just come in and fill the fight. Graham Barron said that this goes back to the commission and the discretion that they want to take on things. Chairman Biello wants to know the punishments that can be give out. Mr. Barron says there is a wide range of punishments that can occur. Commissioner Thompson makes a motion to dismiss this topic. Commissioner Kiker seconds that motion. The commission votes 2-2 on this topic. Chairman Biello makes a motion to fine David Oblas \$100. Vice Chairman Ector seconds that motion. Vice Chairman is not okay allowing something to take place if our rules in place have been violated. Commissioner Thompson wants to know then how we let this go on. Chairman Biello says if we do not follow our rules then we should just throw the rule book out. Commissioner Thompson said it's within our jobs to follow our rules, and that event should have been canceled because the rules we broken. Vice Chairman Ector says move forward with the fine and punish the person in charge internally from the event. Commissioner Thompson said that rules are violated every event. There is a rule in place that does not allow fighters to have facial hair, and yet every fight we allow fighters to fight with facial hair. Chairman Biello wanted to know who was in charge of the event, and Mr. Woodruff said Erin Barnett was the chief official for that event. Chairman Biello wanted to know why she did not cancel the event, and Mr. Woodruff said he was not sure. David Oblas wanted to know what can happen to the fighters if they come to the event over weight, etc. Can you punish the fighters and not just the promoters? Commissioner Thompson wants to know if we are going to follow every rule word for word or are we going to use our discretion to enforce the rules. Adrian Patrick said that sometimes fighters just do not show up, fighters do whatever they want to do. Nate Mann said the problem with the judges and inspectors are not fully aware of all the rules. People will come up to Nate to ask questions for verification. Chairman Biello wants to vote on \$100 fine motion. The Commission votes 2-2 and the motion dies. Commissioner Thompson said that if we are going to fully enforce every rule word for word now we need to notify the promoters and fighters now. Chairman Biello wants to go through the rules and figure out what we are going to do. Graham Barron said the due process is in order and that the rules are in place for people to follow and the rules are meant to be enforced. As long as people are on notice that the rules are going to be followed this way they that is how things are going to be run.

**Motion to Approve** the license application for Curt Render. This topic was tabled to the end of the meeting, and the fighter still was a no show. Tabled until the June meeting.

**Motion to Approve** the license application for Lashaun Blair. This topic was tabled to the end of the meeting, and the fighter still was a no show. Tabled until the June meeting.

**Motion to adjourn.** Chairman Biello makes the motion, Vice Chairman Ector seconds and the commission voted 4-0 to adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m.